only in hand writing. This

meant that a very small

percentage of the

population had access to

The early part of the

seventh century witnessed the first real effort to

produce the Scriptures in language that the people could understand. These

early Anglo-Saxon efforts,

based upon Latin ren-

derings, were almost

futile. The texts were

fragmentary, often con-

fused and incoherent. It

was however, a step in the

ascended the West Saxon throne at the age of twenty-

two, in the year 871 A.D.,

put forth a determined

effort to circulate the

Scriptures among his

subjects. He personally

worked at the task of

translating, but like

Caedmon and Bede, he

died without attaining the

A priesthood, directly

responsible to Rome, was

built up in Great Britain.

Prior to 1250 A.D., the

solid, with no divisions

working on a Latin con-

arrangement of verses

came later. The system thus devised was followed in all subsequent editions.

John Wycliffe, the great

English statesman and

reformer, was born in 1320.

violent opposition.

Latin Vulgate, Hebrew.

and Greek texts were used

as the basis for the tran-

slation. When finished, it

appearance marked the

dawn of a new day in the

In reality two Wycliffe

awkward

sometimes unintelligible from adhering too closely

to the original Latin. The

easier and more skillful in

were produced.

westward march

of

cordance.

desired objective.

right direction

King Alfred,

the revealed truth.

(Part One)

From about 70 to 150

A.D. the majority of

professed Christians

residing in the Roman

Empire spoke Greek. Old

Testament and apostolic.

writings were in demand in

this language. The Sep-

tuagint was much in use during that period. Christainity had

penetrated the Latin-

speaking areas of Roman

Africa by the latter part of

the second century. Latin

versions produced from

Greek texts began to ap-

pear. No tradition about

the date, place or authorship of the first

manuscripts in Latin

It is known of certainity

that the Scillitan Martyers

at Carthage had in their

box of rolls, "letters of

Paul, the just man," in the

year 180 A.D. They were

evidently concerned to

preserve the Pauline

Epistles among their most

By Tertullian's day,

whose writings are dated

20-40 years later, the whole

Bible seems to have been

extant in Latin. His

translations were from the

Greek text. Cyprian,

writing between 240 and

250 A.D., quoted ac-

curately from the Latin

Bible. It may therefore be

inferred that the New

Testament was rendered

into Latin, possibly at Carthage, toward the close of the second century.

A flood of manuscripts

had come into existence by the time Jerome, the

leading scholar of his day,

complete revision.

Carelessness and lack of

damaging the inspired

Jerome began the task in

382 A.D. When his finished

product was officially

adopted it became known

as the Latin Vulgate. The

term means "common or

public use." There is no

way of estimating the

to the preservation and

truth. Later translation

into other languages, came

to be indebted to his monumental work in

Teutons invaded the

British Isles in the middle

part of the fifth century.

Eight hundred years in-

tervened before an

authoritative edition of the

Scriptures appeared in the

Anglo-Saxon language. The

authority during this long

Latin version

Word.

skill

was

promulgation of Bible English language. Its

written

Parts

stiff.

WAS

regarded as highest rendering was somewhat

period. It was available other portions. Con-

personal

cherished possessions.

survives.

John Purvey, the eminent scholar and leader of the Lollard party,

continued the work with the aid of a group of trained helpers. The second Wycliffe Bible was not completed until four years after John Wycliffe died. It was far more idiomatic than the earlier one hundred and fifty

one, having been freed from many confusing Latinisms. Its vocabulary

The popularity of the later version admits no doubt, for even now despite faggots, burning and the ravages of time, more than

was less archaic.

copies remain to confirm the counseil of vnpitouse this fact. The following specimens offer a comparison between the early and the late renderings:

EARLY VERSION

Psalm 1. (1) Blisful the

and in the wei of sinful stod not: and in the chaeser of pestilence sat not.

Variations Of The Bible

(2) But in the lawe of the Lord his will; and in the lawe of hym he shal seeteli thinke dai and nyst.

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Psalm 1. (1) Blessed is the man, that sede ntt in the councel of wickid men; and stood not in the wele of synneries, and sat not in the chaier of pestilence.

(2) But his wille is in the lawe of the Lord; and he schal bithenke in the law of

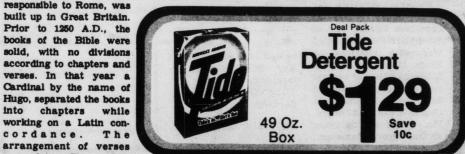
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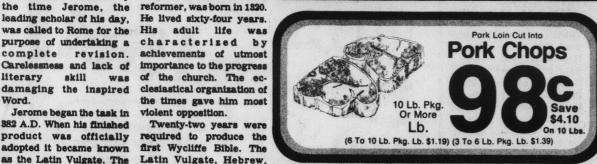
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(Begins on page 1)

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